

PDC Committee Meeting Agenda Item 3-13-17
FLEX and Funding

Howard and Greg,

Here are the results of the survey from the Student Services Division.

1. It was unanimous that the Counselors would like to continue having the two mandatory flex days. They were more concerned with the offerings and content of the workshops. Some of the comments were – “I would like to see more workshops that will add to and improve my skills”, “I need more training and skills in dealing with students in a crisis situations”, “I want to have presenters who are experts in the their fields”, “Don’t have division meetings during the second half of flex day, it lowers the attendance of the afternoon workshops”, “Faculty should be attending workshops not in division meetings”, “Keynote speakers were good at the last flex days so please continue to find good engaging and practical speakers”.
2. Professional development opportunities - The Counseling Faculty felt that it was less about the money and more about the time. The unanimous sentiment was it’s hard to find time to attend a conference or workshop.

Probably an anonymous, index-card card survey would have been better than our approach, which was just to ask questions in a discussion format. Elena asked the questions, and I took the notes that follow. (Feel free to fill in anything that I missed, Elena.)

Here are the notes I took from the discussion:

When asked

Were you unable to take advantage of a Professional Development opportunity because of funding limits?

15 people raised hands.

Do you wish to continue mandatory flex-days?

A discussion began regarding the problems with the flex-days. Comments included:

Problems with Flex Days:

- Not student focused
- They seem focused on the institutional bureaucracy, not on teaching/learning
- Little Teaching/Learning instruction. Not helping students.
- They have gotten better (more student-focused sections than there used to be, but still needs work.)
- How is this better for our students than an instructional day?
- A lot of the sessions are focused on the faculty's responsibilities for administrative support; however, there is no other time to do training required for Curriculum, SLO, etc. compliance,
- Why not do the professional duty training on College Day or Convocation and eliminate mandatory Flex-day? The speakers and Power Point presentations on these days not very student, staff, or faculty focused.

- Middle of the semester not the best way – do it at the beginning
- Child Development Center is closed when we hold the days in the middle of the semester, which affects faculty and staff.
- Convocation and college day could be used better to address training issues, then eliminate the mandatory Flex Days.
- Department workshops add more value to better teaching/student success than the institutional focus of the Flex Day.

So, you can see that the conversation headed in a certain direction (as these things do). I would be inclined to send out a survey with these questions to collect a better overall picture of the faculty's feelings about the Mandatory Flex Day. Also, I am sure staff have a different set of insights into what works/doesn't work/might work better as well, which were, of course, not included in this conversation, but might be gathered in a survey.

(An interesting aside: One person caught me on the way out of our meeting and mentioned that he always put positive responses on the PDC committee survey after flex day because he knew the committee put in a lot of work and wanted to commend them. However, he pointed out, although the PDC did the best it could, given the situation, he would rather turn the day back into an instructional one, but there was not a way to get that across in the post-Flex-day-survey.)

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PDC Committee,

As we discussed during our last committee meeting, we were going to ask people in our Divisions about the suggested number of Mandatory FLEX Days and also whether or not current conference funding levels would discourage them from attending a conference.

I asked questions in our MSEPS division meeting and received 21 responses (recorded on index cards).

- 15 people indicated that they do want Mandatory FLEX days. 4 people said they do not want them. 2 people were ambivalent. There were suggestions about holding them closer to the beginning of the semester, but the majority of responses seemed to indicate to keep things the same as they are now with one FLEX day in the Fall and another in the Spring.

- 14 people indicated that the current amount of conference funding (\$250) would dissuade them from attending conferences. 3 people said it would not dissuade them. One person was ambivalent about the question. Three people did not answer this question.

If the Division reps for this committee could please “reply all” with a summary of the discussion that occurred in your Division (it does not need to be this specific), we would greatly appreciate the data. Thank you!